

OLD WILSON MILE WALKING TOUR



THE "MILE" IS JUST THE BEGINNING TO THE OLD WILSON STORY WITH ITS RICH HERITAGE AND UNIQUE ARCHITECTURE

INTERESTING FACTS

The Old Wilson Historic District, 1850s through the 1920s, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984. Architectural styles include Gothic Revival, Italianate, Victorian Cottages, Queen Anne, Colonial Revival and Bungalows. Several churches, apartment buildings, small neighborhood stores, and Maplewood Cemetery complete the district. In the early 1900's Wilson's agriculturally based economy was primarily cotton. By 1919, Wilson became the world's largest Bright Leaf Tobacco Market. Today it is known as the "World's Greatest Tobacco Market" moving more tobacco than any other market in North America.

The area includes five loosely defined neighborhoods.

College Park (1890's) was centered on Kinsey Institute 1897, which became Atlantic Christian College in 1902 which changed its name to Barton College in 1990. Homeowners were traditionally merchants and artisans. Their neighborhood had several small stores and a few commercial buildings which gave the area a sense of self-sufficiency.

Whitehead Place is the group of large and impressive residences which combine subtle Queen Anne asymmetrical massing with non-classical details along with the richness and variety of Wilson's bungalows. The land was originally owned by Howell Gray Whitehead a prominent planter.

Rountree Place developed by realtors George A. Barfoot and William N. Graves in the late 1910s and 1920s. The area included in the Old Wilson Historic District consists only of the 900 and 1000 blocks of West Vance Street with its Colonial Revival and Bungalow houses.

Maplewood is the oldest, most architecturally diverse and covers approximately half of the Old Wilson Historic District. Its name is taken from Maplewood Cemetery which was established in 1876. The earliest building dates from 1853 with the majority of the houses built from the 1880s through the 1920s.

Woodard Circle (1898 - 1917) located on two blocks at the NE end of N. Goldsboro Street was once one of Wilson's most fashionable neighborhoods. It was built on land original owned by the Woodard family. Adjacent to the railroad tracks and the business district, it was once one of the city's most beautiful tree canopied gateways to Wilson for those approaching town from the Northeast.

1 THE A. J. SIMMS HOUSE

211 HILL ST. - CA. 1874, THIS ELABORATE, DISTINCTIVE VICTORIAN COTTAGE WAS ORIGINALLY OWNED BY A.J. SIMMS, THE FIRST CLERK OF THE SUPERIOR COURT OF WILSON COUNTY FROM 1855 UNTIL THE CIVIL WAR. THE CROSS-GABLE HOUSE FEATURES CIRCULAR VENTS IN WOODSHINGLED GABLES, A TURNED BALUSTRADE AND OVERSIZED [SOME FLOOR-TO-CEILING] WINDOWS WITH HINGED SHUTTERS.

4 DR. WILLIAM S. ANDERSON HOUSE

316 W GREEN ST. - CA. 1905, ONE OF THE DISTRICTS MOST OUTSTANDING AND THE BEST PRESERVED EXAMPLES OF COLONIAL REVIVAL ARCHITECTURE BUILT FOR A LEADING PHYSICIAN, THE 2-STORY 3-BAY HOUSE IS SHELTERED BY A TALL, SLATE COVERED HIP ROOF, AND PIERCED BY INTERIOR CHIMNEYS AND SMALL PEDIMENTED DORMERS. PALLADIAN WINDOWS WITH COLORED GLASS ARE LOCATED IN THE CENTRAL GABLE.

6 JUDGE HENRY G. CONNOR HOUSE

109 GRAY ST. - CA. 1907, THIS HOUSE REFLECTS NEO-CLASSICAL REVIVAL ARCHITECTURE, YET COMBINES QUEEN ANNE AND ORIENTAL INFLUENCES TO GIVE AN ECLECTIC APPEARANCE, COMMON AT THE TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY. IT IS ASSOCIATED WITH JUDGE CONNOR; A LAWYER, JUDGE OF THE SUPREME COURT FOR THE THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT, NC SENATOR, PRESIDENT OF BB&T, ASSOCIATE JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF NC, AND THE U.S. DISTRICT BENCH FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT. THE SLATE HIPPED-ROOF HOME IS PIERCED BY ORNATELY DETAILED INTERIOR CHIMNEYS AND MULTIFACETED DORMERS. THE WRAPAROUND PORCH FEATURES IONIC COLUMNS AND DENTIL MOLDING.

2 A. P. SIMPSON HOUSE

310 W GREEN ST. - CA. 1880, EXCEPTIONAL DETAIL IS FOUND ON THIS VICTORIAN COTTAGE BUILT FOR A DRY GOODS MERCHANT. THE SLAT BALUSTRADE, LACY SCROLLED BRACKETS AND A DELICATE SAWTOOTH FRIEZE ARE SOME OF WILSON'S FINEST SURVIVING SAWN WORK DETAILS. IN 1882 IT WAS PURCHASED BY J.F. FARMER, A COMMUNITY LEADER WHO SERVED AS PASTOR OF THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH WHICH IS STILL STANDING AT 301 GREEN STREET.

3 WEAVER-SIMMS HOUSE

307 W GREEN ST. - CA. 1881, A TYPICAL VICTORIAN COTTAGE, ASSOCIATED WITH TWO OWNERS; SELF-MADE MEN JOHN L. WEAVER AND W. W. SIMMS. WEAVER WAS ONE OF WILSON'S PIONEER HARDWARE MERCHANTS AND SIMMS WAS ONE OF THE TOWN'S LEADING LUMBER INDUSTRIALISTS. THE 1-STORY HOUSE FEATURES A WRAPAROUND PORCH WITH A "GRID" FRIEZE, BRACKETS AND TURNED COLUMNS. TRIPLE WINDOWS WITH MULTI-PATTERN SASH FLANK THE CENTRAL ENTRANCE.

5 ROBERT S. WILKINS HOUSE

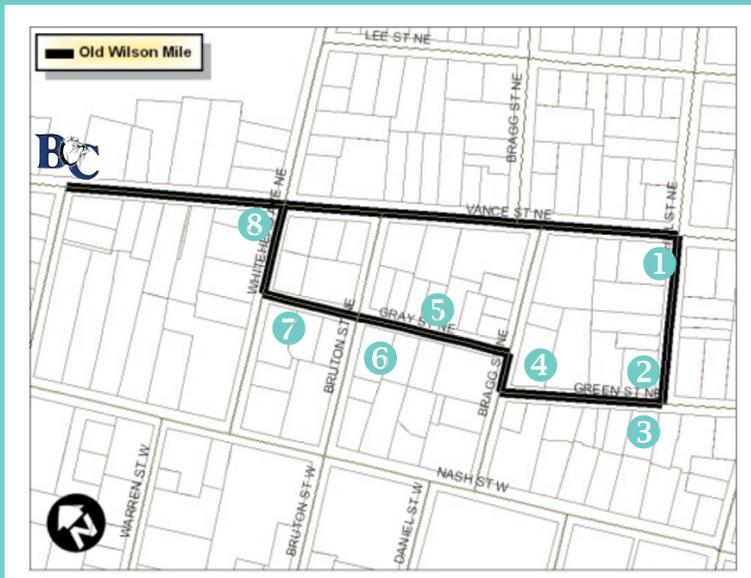
106 GRAY ST. - C. 1922, THIS 1½ STORY BRICK BUNGALOW, REPEATED WITH MINOR VARIATIONS THROUGHOUT WILSON, WAS BUILT BY CONTRACTOR JAMES E. WILKINS AS THE RESIDENCE FOR HIS THREE CHILDREN. IT FEATURES A CLIPPED GABLE-END ROOF WITH EXPOSED RAFTER TAILS, A PROJECTING FRONT-FACING CLIPPED DORMER WITH RECESSED WINDOWS FRAMED BY PAIRED SQUARE COLUMNS. THE ENGAGED PORCH IS SUPPORTED BY TALL TAPERED WOOD COLUMNS ON SHALLOW BRICK PLINTHS, AND PROVIDES ACCESS TO THE OFFSET ENTRANCE. THE BRACKETED DORMER AND GABLES FEATURE WOOD SHINGLES. WILKINS' FIRM WAS THE LONGEST OPERATING CONSTRUCTION COMPANY IN WILSON.

8 DR. OSCAR HOOKS HOUSE

115 WHITEHEAD AVE - CA. 1915, THE ONLY ENTIRELY STUCCOED BUNGALOW IN WILSON, THE 1½-STORY HOUSE WAS DESIGNED BY BEREWELL RIDDICK OF VIRGINIA, AND BUILT FOR DENTIST OSCAR HOOKS. IT FEATURES A BROAD GABLE ROOF THAT FEATURES TO ENGAGE THE FRONT PORCH. A BROAD FRONT-GABLE DORMER WITH BRACKETS OCCUPIES THE FRONT ELEVATION. FOUR BEVELED MULTI-PANED FRENCH DOORS WITH CUT GLASS KNOBS OPEN ONTO THE LARGE, MASSIVE TERRACE, ADJACENT TO THE FRONT PORCH, CARRIED BY LOW ARCHES THAT REST ON MASSIVE CORNER PILLARS.

7 WILKINS-WALSTON HOUSE

205 GRAY ST. - CA. 1907, THIS HANDSOME EXAMPLE OF LATE QUEEN ANNE/EARLY NEO-CLASSICAL REVIVAL ARCHITECTURE WAS THE HOME OF THE CONTRACTOR AND BUILDER JAMES E. WILKINS AND LATER H.H. WALSTON, A PROSPEROUS PLANTER. THE 2-STORY FRAME HOUSE IS ASYMMETRICAL IN DESIGN AND FEATURES A SLATE ROOF ADORNED WITH TILED RIDGE POLES, CAPPED AT THE GABLE ENDS WITH SCROLLED METAL ORNAMENTS. THE L-SHAPED PORCH FEATURES IONIC COLUMNS, TWO ARCHED STAINED GLASS WINDOWS AND MULTI-FACETED TRANSOM, SIDELIGHT AND FRONT WINDOWS ADD INTEREST TO THE FENESTRATION.



PRESERVATION OF WILSON

OUR MISSION

Preservation of Wilson provides leadership in the revitalization efforts of Wilson County's unique architectural heritage. As stewards of Wilson's historic buildings, we actively promote historic, architectural, and culturally significant properties. Our efforts are to ensure that revitalized properties will contribute in the aesthetics of the community, increase the value of surrounding properties, and create a safe and welcoming environment.

OUR VISION

We envision the future of Wilson County's historic districts will offer residential areas:

- That welcome people from all walks of life
- That have a growing number of preservation minded property owners
- That when there is a vacant and abandoned property it is viewed as an economic development opportunity
- That tell the Wilson Story with its rich heritage and unique architecture
- That are pedestrian friendly neighborhoods which offer a safe and comfortable place to call Home



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